



## Weekly Drought Brief Monday March 24, 2014

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### **CURRENT CONDITIONS**

**Recent Precipitation:** No rain or snow fell over the past week in California. Precipitation totals (in inches) from Monday, March 17 through Sunday, March 23:

- **Folsom: 0.00"** in the last week. 12.17" since July 1, 64% of normal by this date.
- **Fresno: 0.00"** in the last week. 3.40" since July 1, 36% of normal by this date.
- **Hetch Hetchy: 0.00"** in the last week. 14.51" since July 1, 48% of normal by this date.
- **Los Angeles: 0.00"** in the last week. 5.47" since July 1, 42% of normal by this date.
- **Modesto: 0.00"** in the last week. 5.01" since July 1, 46% of normal by this date.
- **Oroville: 0.00"** in the last week. 15.88" since July 1, 59% of normal this date.
- **Pollock Pines: 0.00"** in the last week. 19.28" since July 1, 44% of normal by this date.
- **Redding: 0.00"** in the last week. 17.32" since July 1, 61% of normal by this date.
- **Sacramento: 0.00"** in the last week. 7.15" since July 1, 40% of normal by this date.
- **Shasta: 0.00"** in the last week. 26.60" since July 1, 50% of normal by this date.
- **Willits: 0.00"** in the last week. 25.88" since July 1, 60% of normal by this date.

**Near-term Outlook for Precipitation:** Beginning Tuesday, several storms will travel through the state that will possibly bring significant rain and snow. Precipitation is predicted to be heaviest in the far northern portion of the state.

**\*\*As our state's rainy season nears its end, much of California has received only about 50% of normal precipitation for this rainy season. Heavy rain and snow would have to fall throughout California most days in April to reach average annual rain and snowfall levels, which is highly unlikely. Even with such precipitation, California would remain in drought conditions, due to low water supplies in reservoirs from the two previous dry years.\*\***

**Snow survey:** The most recent [snowpack survey](#), conducted on February 27, recorded California snowpack at 24% of normal. The next snowpack survey will be conducted April 1. A more [recent update](#) using automated devices shows snowpack at 24% of normal as of March 23.

**Reservoir Levels (% capacity):** [Reservoir Levels](#) as of March 22 are very low, including: Don Pedro 53%; Exchequer 22%; Folsom Lake 42%; Lake Oroville 46%; Millerton Lake 32%; New Melones 44%; Pine Flat 21%; San Luis 42%; Shasta 46%; and Trinity Lake 53%. An update of water levels at [other smaller reservoirs](#) is also available.

**Vulnerable Water Systems:** The California Department of Public Health is providing technical and funding assistance to help several communities facing near-term drinking water shortages and is monitoring water systems across the state to determine where else it can provide support. Updated information can be found at the [CDPH Drinking Water Program](#) website.

**Fire Danger:** 820 fires have been reported across the state since January 1, burning 2,284 acres. This year's fire activity is well above the year-to-date average of 274 fires, burning 1,009 acres. 82 new fires were reported over the past week, most of which were kept small thanks to additional firefighters, fire engines and firefighting aircraft added during this dry winter. CalFire moved several fire engines to Southern California from the north last week to respond to dry conditions there. Despite efforts to keep new fires small and contained, Monterey and Riverside Counties each experienced large fires this week burning several hundred acres.

## **KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM LAST WEEK**

### **Federal Government**

- **State and Federal agencies assess upcoming water needs:** As California's rainy season nears its end, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the California Department of Water Resources and the State Water Resources Control Board are assessing the amount of water needed in the coming dry months to provide enough water to residents for drinking, sanitation and other essential public health and safety purposes and to provide enough water flow into the Delta in order to prevent saltwater contamination of fresh water supplies conveyed through the Delta and to meet legal protections of endangered fish.

This assessment of water needed for public health and safety and salinity control will help the federal and state water projects develop their updated projected water allocations to each project's water contractors that will occur around April 1. Extensive discussions are occurring with effected water contractors and other stakeholders as this assessment is developed. A [summary of water management decisions during the drought](#) provides more background on this subject.

- **CDFA:** The US Department of Food and Agriculture and the California Department of Food and Agriculture held their sixth regional outreach forum in [Cloverdale](#) to discuss resources available to farmers and farm workers hurt by the drought. This session completes the agricultural agencies' current series of outreach sessions.

### **State Government**

- **Request granted for flexible water management by state and federal water projects:** A request made by the California Department of Water Resources and the Bureau of Reclamation to the State Water Board for more flexibility in operations was granted on Tuesday by the Water Board's Executive Director. [This action](#) enables the state and federal water projects to continue exporting increased amounts of water from the Delta after February's storms by exercising flexibility regarding the state's outflow requirements, which direct how much water must flow through the delta out to the ocean. This request enables water exports to be used for beneficial uses beyond essential public health and safety uses. State and federal fish agencies reviewed and concurred with this action.
- **State Water Board improves \$800 million loan program for water recycling:** The State Water Board [reduced the interest rate on \\$800 million of available loans](#) for water recycling projects last week. This action cuts the interest rate to 1% for loans from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund to build water recycling projects. If fully utilized,

these loans could generate an additional 150,000 acre feet of recycled water each year throughout the state.

- **CalFire and National Guard prepare for wildfire fighting:** In advance of the state's driest months, CalFire and the California National Guard are working together to plan and train for joint firefighting actions. This preparation includes shared helicopter training at CalFire's training academy in early April.
- **New video clips at Save our Water:** The state's unified water conservation campaign, Save our Water, has launched a new series of videos called [Californians Don't Waste](#). These videos were created with the Association of California Water Agencies and are available for circulation on the [Save our Water website](#).
- **Community sessions planned to better understand drought-related needs:** [California Volunteers](#)—state government's volunteer and philanthropic outreach arm—is teaming up with the California Endowment to hold information gathering sessions in drought-impacted communities to better understand how foundation or corporate support for drought response can be directed. Their first session will be held in Salinas later this week.
- **Bank of America and AT&T lead off private support for drought relief:** Two recent announcements show how private companies can respond to the drought: Bank of America announced last week that it will direct [\\$500,000 in donations](#) to several Central Valley and Central Coast non-profit groups to provide food aid and other critical services. AT&T made public its [actions to conserve water](#), including avoiding fleet vehicle washing during the drought, reducing facility landscape irrigation by 50%, and suspending decorative water features at corporate buildings.
- **State Water Board approves flexible water management in Yuba County:** The State Water Board approved [a petition from the Yuba County Water Agency](#) last week to add a diversion from the Sacramento River to its water right permit in order for it to transfer 34,000 acre feet to East Bay Municipal Utility district over an extended period. The Water Board has recently approved several requests by local water management agencies for flexible movement of water throughout the state.
- **Cost Data:** Cal OES continues to gather drought-related costs from state agencies and local governments, which is reported weekly to the Drought Taskforce.
- **Governor's Drought Task Force:** The Taskforce continues to meet daily to take actions that conserve water and coordinate state response to the drought.

### **Local Government**

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** A total of 35 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts:
  - **Counties:** Glenn, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Santa Barbara, San Joaquin, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Sutter, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yuba
  - **Cities:** Brooktrails Township-Mendocino County, City of Willits-Mendocino County, City of St. Helena-Napa County, City of Calistoga-Napa County, City of American Canyon-Napa County, City of Santa Barbara-Santa Barbara County
  - **Tribes:** Hoopa Valley Tribe in Humboldt County, Yurok Tribe in Del Norte County, Tule River Indian Tribe in Tulare County, Karuk Tribe in Siskiyou/Humboldt Counties, Sherwood Valley Pomo Indian Tribe
  - **Special Districts:** Lake Don Pedro Community Services District, Placer County Water Agency (PCWA), Twain Harte Community Services District, Carpinteria Valley Water District, Sonoma County Water Agency, Meiners Oaks Water District, Mariposa Public Utility District

- **Water Agency Conservation Efforts:** The Association of California Water Agencies [has identified](#) several hundred local water agencies that have implemented water conservation actions. These water agencies [are responding to the drought](#) by implementing conservation programs, which include voluntary calls for reduced water usage and mandatory restrictions where water shortages are worst.
- **County Drought Taskforces:** A total of 25 counties have established drought task forces to coordinate local drought response. These counties include: Butte, Fresno, Kern, Madera, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Monterey, Nevada, Orange, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Siskiyou, Solano, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, and Tuolumne.

#### DROUGHT RELATED WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

[Drought.CA.Gov](#): California's Drought Information Clearinghouse

Governor's [Proclamation of Drought Emergency](#)

State's Water Conservation Campaign, [Save our Water](#)

Local Government [Clearinghouse and Toolkit](#)

California Department of Food and Agriculture, [Drought information](#)

California Department of Water Resources [Current Water Conditions](#)

California Data Exchange Center, [Snow Pack/Water Levels](#)

California State Water Resources Control Board, Water Rights, [Drought Info and Actions](#)

California Natural Resources Agency, [Drought Info and Actions](#)

California Department of Public Health, Drinking Water [CDPH Drinking Water Program](#)

California State Water Project, [Information](#)

USDA Drought Designations by County [CA County Designations](#)

USDA Disaster and Drought Assistance Information [USDA Programs](#)

Small Business Administration Disaster Support: [www.sba.gov/disaster](http://www.sba.gov/disaster)